

Go Higher Communities

The Go Higher community initiative, a component of the council's Go Higher public communication campaign, brings local educators and business, labor, government, libraries, and civic groups together to raise education levels in communities. Last year, 10 communities were selected to participate, and this year five new communities have been added. The new Go Higher communities are (1) Daviess County, (2) Henderson County, (3) Cumberland, Monroe, and Clinton Counties, (4) Pike County, and (5) Whitley County (see attached map).

Go Higher communities receive resources and support to develop and sustain innovative strategies for addressing their most pressing education needs. Guthrie/Mayes, the campaign's public relations firm, assists community leaders in leveraging partnerships from the private sector and generating media coverage of Go Higher initiatives. The most successful strategies that emerge from this effort will be shared as models for other communities across the state.

As a first step, each participating community is encouraged to form a local P-16 council. To date, P-16 councils have been funded in seven Go Higher communities, and local council development is underway in three. Additionally, the council, through its Adult Education Initiative Trust Fund, is providing \$20,000 to each community that conducts a local education needs assessment. Through the needs assessment, community leaders are identifying gaps in educational achievement and developing strategies to address those gaps including:

- reducing barriers to adult learners' successful transition to college and the workplace
- removing achievement gaps for minority and economically disadvantaged students
- reducing high school dropout rates and increasing college-going rates
- aligning high school and adult education standards with college standards and local workforce area needs
- building workforce education programs responsive to the needs of current and prospective employers and employees
- coordinating existing educational programs and services for adults to maximize their effectiveness

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